

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7753

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4185

E. O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PFOR, CPAS, IN, US

SUBJECT: DROBOT CASE

REFS: STATE 058870 AND 067313

1. THE EMBASSY PUT TWO QUESTIONS TO S. R. MEHTA, CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECT TAXES, MINISTRY OF FINANCE, WHO IS THE SENIOR INDIAN OFFICIAL DEALING WITH THE WESTINGHOUSE TAX PROBLEMS. FIRST, WOULD IT BE USEFUL FOR A WESTINGHOUSE REPRESENTATIVE TO VISIT NEW DELHI TO SEEK A SETTLEMENT OF THE TAX PROBLEM. SECOND, IF A REPRESENTATIVE (WE MENTIONED CHARLES LYONS) VISITS INDIA, CAN HE FUNCTION FREELY IN NEW DELHI AND LEAVE WHEN HE DESIRES TO DO SO.

2. MEHTA ANSWERED THE FIRST QUESTION IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, SAYING THAT THE GOI WANTS ONLY TO GET THE TAXES PAID. IT WOULD WELCOME A VISIT BY A WESTINGHOUSE REPRESENTATIVE, CONSIDERS IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE AS IT ASSUMES THAT WESTINGHOUSE, AN INTERNATIONAL COMPANY, DOES NOT WISH TO HAVE A BAD NAME BECAUSE OF JAN DROBOT. IN ANSWER TO THE SECOND QUESTION, MEHTA SAID FLATLY THAT THE GOI WOULD NOT DETAIN A WESTINGHOUSE REPRESENTATIVE. MEHTA CONCLUDED THAT ANY SETTLEMENT WITH WESTINGHOUSE MUST BE MADE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO WHATEVER ACTION THE GOI DECIDES

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TO TAKE AGAINST DROBOT.

3. IN REGARD TO THE ADVISABILITY OF WESTINGHOUSE REPS
VISITING INDIAN FOR NORMAL COMMERCIAL BUSINESS, WE PRESUME
WESTINGHOUSE WILL WISH TO WAIT THE ADVICE OF
LYONS, WHOM WE ASSUME WILL COME TO NEW DELHI ON THE
BASIS OF MEHTA'S ADVICE. WE WILL CONSULT WITH LYONS
ON THE QUESTIONS WHEN AND IF HE ARRIVES.
SAXBE

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